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LOUISIANA Conservationist

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

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Conservation Pledge

**I give my
pledge as an American
to save and faithfully to
defend from waste the
natural resources of
my country—its soil
and minerals, its
forests, waters
and wildlife**

Published Bi-Monthly in the interest of conservation of Louisiana's natural resources by the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, 400 Royal Street, New Orleans 16, Louisiana.

Sly and nocturnal in its habits, the raccoon is well known among furbearing animals of Louisiana. Its pelt is in demand by the fur industry and statistics kept over a period of two decades show that it commands a good price in the fur industry. This has remained constant during recent years and indications are that raccoon will be widely trapped this year in Louisiana.
(Photo by Jack Britt)

LOUISIANA Conservationist

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

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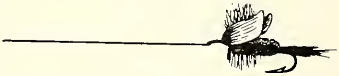

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LAST CALL

To Subscribers

Of The

LOUISIANA Conservationist

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

In the November-December issue of the LOUISIANA CONSERVATIONIST subscribers were asked to fill out a correct address form and mail it back to the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, 400 Royal Street, New Orleans 16, Louisiana. Just in case you failed to read the notice and return the address form, this is a reminder that this is the LAST CALL. Please print your name and correct mailing address on the form below and mail immediately. ALL present subscribers who fail to return this correct mailing address card will automatically be dropped from the mailing list effective February 1, 1963. So, if you wish to continue receiving the LOUISIANA CONSERVATIONIST, fill out the boxed form below, place in envelope, affix a postal stamp and return now.

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EDITORIAL

IT IS TRADITIONAL at this time of the year to glance back over the year that has just past and fully appraise it. Accomplishments of the past often serve in charting a course of action for the future.

During this two month period when hunting seasons will wane and come to a close, the thoughts of many of us will be turned to planning fishing trips and other spring and summer outdoor activities.

Perhaps there is no better time than this period of transition from hunting to fishing for us to reflect upon the great recreational and economic value of Louisiana's wildlife and fisheries resources. Few states have been endowed with such a diversified abundance of game and furbearing animals, along with both fresh and salt water fisheries resources.

It is gratifying to me to note that in the past year there has been an obvious interest in grass roots conservation education and more public interest in the wildlife and fisheries resources of the state, their management, utilization, and perpetuation.

This is not a sudden awakening on the part of the people of Louisiana. On the contrary, this growing interest can be interpreted as the result of a progressive campaign by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to bring about an interest on the part of all the people in the state in these natural resources which mean so much to so many people.

In making our plans for the months ahead, it would further the good which has already been accomplished for us to redouble our efforts so that this growing interest in Louisiana's wildlife and fisheries resources will be passed along from person to person.

In this fashion, we would be serving two important purposes. One would be to disseminate information that would result in public appreciation of the value of Louisiana fish and game for both economical and recreational purposes; and the other would be to pass along information about the state's many attractions.

These many attractions include camping, boating, water skiing, sailing, and unexcelled skin diving opportunities. Platforms erected by the oil exploration and drilling companies have made the Louisiana coastal waters a mecca for fishermen and skin divers. This generous sprinkling of offshore platforms serve to attract fish of many species. This abundance of fish in immediate offshore waters has increased the popularity of fishing contests and tournaments, attracting anglers from many states whose spending bolsters the overall economy of Louisiana.

One important development during the year past has been exploration of big game fishing off the Louisiana coast, particularly in waters out of South Pass. Louisiana is definitely on the big game fishing map of world anglers. Giant blue marlin, sleek white marlin, savage sailfish, tuna, wahoo, and bull dolphin are taken within two hour's boat run of land.

L. D. YOUNG, JR.
Director

The wildlife instructions of the Commission's educational staff have made a significant contribution to the task of supplying information about wildlife and Louisiana's wildlife resources. Their activities have taken them before school groups, PTA organizations, Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups, sportsmen's clubs, civic clubs, garden clubs, and numerous other organizations throughout Louisiana.

Their job of carrying the wildlife story to the people of the state has been well done. The success of the program which includes movies, other visual aids, displays, and distribution of literature can be easily noted in the requests for repeat engagements before groups which have expanded or expressed interest in additional information. The program will be continued, and accelerated where possible.

In looking back over the year that has just past, the future course of our activities becomes clear. The Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission will continue to direct its activities toward utilization and preservation of its many wildlife and fisheries resources.

In many instances we have every reason to believe present resources can be expanded or replenished, thus providing greater sport and further recreational and economic benefits than in the past.

We look upon this challenge as a goal that can be accomplished. Continued support of a public growing more aware of the value of these resources will be of great assistance in the Commission's program.

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Tall marsh vegetation such as shown above played an important roll in the former ecology of over 4,000,000 acres of coastal marshes. It served to stabilize water fluctuation and salinity and afforded protection against hurricane tides and wave action, securely holding peaty soil. It was present when the muskrat population reached its peak in the 1940's, followed by the nutria peak of the 1950's. Battered by four major storms and unprecedented industrialization, this type of marsh vegetation is scarce today. Its gradual disappearance tended to bring about a change in basic edaphic conditions, not particularly conducive to the southern muskrat. While not favorable to muskrats, the change did result in creating vast additional habitat for waterfowl.

Louisiana's Fur Industry Today

Ted O'Neil **Photos by Jack Britt**

LOUISIANA'S FUR INDUSTRY, once participated in by as many as 20,000 skilled trappers, and amounting to a 15 to 20 million dollar annual economy, gives every promise of having leveled off.

Probably one of the most stabilizing factors is the present and potential role that nutria will play in Louisiana's fur producing industry.

While not reaching the boom enjoyed in peak muskrat years, the number of trappers will increase sharply this season. This year and the next two or three seasons will find more trappers seeking furbearing animals throughout the state.

When trapping muskrats during the peak production years, those engaged in the commercial harvesting of this species were limited to approximately 1,000,000 acres of prime muskrat marshland.

There is every indication that this year will be the first year in two decades when all of the state will be trapped for furbearing animals whose pelts are finding ready market.

This will increase in added income for more people, and in more revenue for the state—"new money" coming into Louisiana from European and New York dealers in furs.

Aside from the upswing in total revenue to the state, there are other side beneficial factors expected to come to light following the 1962-63 trapping season.

One of these will be a marked increase in trapping of predators which have been left alone to a great extent in years past and are now at an all-time high. Statewide trapping will result in the harvest of a number of predatory furbearers, with resultant beneficial results to small game and game bird populations. Perhaps the greatest benefit along this line will show up in the bobwhite quail populations.

Clear indication of this statewide interest in trapping is the fact that the Louisiana supply of traps has been sold out. Wholesalers are depleted and back orders for traps are reported from suppliers all over the state.

The present healthy outlook for Louisiana furs can be attributed to several reasons. Foremost, perhaps, is the consumer demand for fur collars and fur trimmed garments. This resulted from promotional efforts in the garment trade. Those efforts, if continued, will keep the trend moving upward.

Even if concentrated promotional efforts should be lessened, it is probably that the demand already stimulated will assure consumer sales for at least two years.

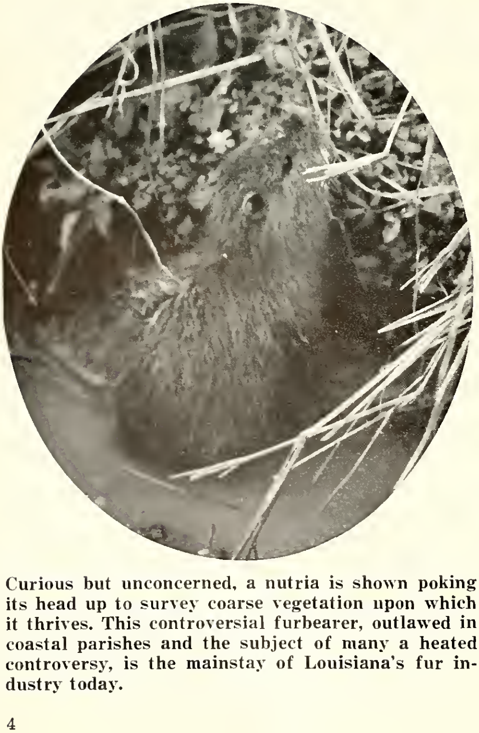
Another important reason is that the Louisiana nutria is regarded with more respect in Louisiana than it formerly was. Nutria is described as the backbone of the present state fur industry.

The Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has stood by its guns that nutria could become an important segment of the fur industry and allied industries. In spite of opposition in some quarters, the commission has long pointed to the potential value of the animals for fur and for meat which is used in the pet food industries and in supplying mink ranches with needed meat for mink food.

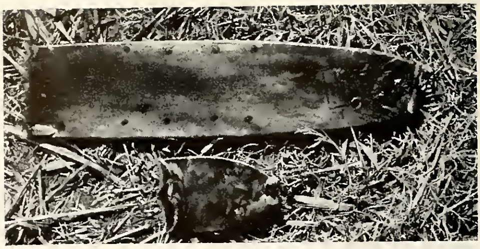
Unlike muskrats, nutria can be obtained in commercial quantities from approximately 20,000,000 acres of state lands. To substantiate this, it should be pointed out that during the hey-day of muskrat trapping, most of the muskrats were concentrated on approximately 1,000,000 acres.

This area consisted principally of brackish, coastal marsh where three-corner grass supplied muskrats with their main food. The area referred to supported roughly 85 per cent of the entire muskrat population in Louisiana.

Nutria offer broader uses in the fur industry. The pelts dye well and are highly respected in the trade. For many years they have been considered quality fur, on a par with beaver and mink.



Curious but unconcerned, a nutria is shown poking its head up to survey coarse vegetation upon which it thrives. This controversial furbearer, outlawed in coastal parishes and the subject of many a heated controversy, is the mainstay of Louisiana's fur industry today.



For the benefit of those not familiar with the sizes of muskrats and nutria, this comparative photograph is a good one. The nutria pelt at top dwarfs the muskrat pelt below. In the trade, these are referred to as "cased pelts". They have been put on wire frames which stretch the pelts out while they are being dried.

Multiple uses in garment manufacture and trim give nutria a wider price range, with prices of the fur easily adjusted in keeping with their use. Nutria have proved more adaptable for different garment use, lending well to plucking and shearing for garment use calling for that process. Nutria are also desirable as "long hair" furs, unplucked and unsheared. They are highly desirable in the "cloak and hat trade."

Another good feature offered by nutria is that the fur goes well in all colors.

Perhaps one of the most basic reasons for the feeling that Louisiana's fur industry will now remain stable and not fluctuate as much as 100 per cent from one trapping season to another is the fact that nutria fur production is stable and reasonably priced.

In the gathering of raw nutria pelts by trapping, there is not likely to be abrupt changes in the supply, as in the case of muskrats. Nutria will survive and fare well in greatly diversified terrain. The animals are hardy, almost indifferent to climatic changes.

Fluctuating weather changes do not show sharp decreases in the number of nutria trapped each day. This is not true of muskrat trapping conditions. Foggy and warm temperature will send muskrats into cover and trapping success will be spotty during those periods.

A little known, but highly important role played by nutria is seen in the utilization of the meat. Last year alone, nutria was quick frozen and found ready market with mink ranchers and manufacturers of pet food. An estimated 10,000,000 pounds of nutria meat was sold.

The size of the animals lends their carcasses to profitable utilization, thus providing trappers with the proverbial "two cracks at the same ball". Trappers are able to sell the pelts and also market the carcass of the nutria, thus adding to their income.

This freezing of nutria is an expanding industry, capable of consuming all of the raw meat available to it. In addition to bolstering the income to the trapper, it has increased the scope of freez-

With the location of processing plants in Louisiana, new processes have been put into operation for the drying of furs. Here nutria pelts are shown spread on the drying rack. Pelts are cut up the back because it is the underside of the nutria which is the most desirable in the trade.

ing operations, filling in during the winter months when sea-foods freezing is slow.

Most important perhaps, it assures continued trapping of nutria resulting in the availability of pelts. A certain source of supply is paramount with fur dealers and buyers, and is of prime concern to the garment industry. Without a continued and assured source of supply, promotional activities by the garment and fur industry are rare.

In the highly competitive and fickle fur industry, assurance of a fur supply is a "must" before promotion begins. This is particularly true of the raccoon. Before the current cloak trade promotions (collars, trim and hat) industries began their promotion of raccoon they waited for a number of years until a large number of raccoon furs had been built up in storage. Then they purchased the entire stock and raccoon pelts flowed into the hands of garment manufacturers.

It follows that trapping of raccoons which began to climb last year is responsible in part for the sell-out of traps during the fall and early winter months.

A typical Louisiana swamp trapper's camp, showing a cluster of small buildings, boats, and the rustic but scenic locations which are home to many trappers during the fur trapping season.

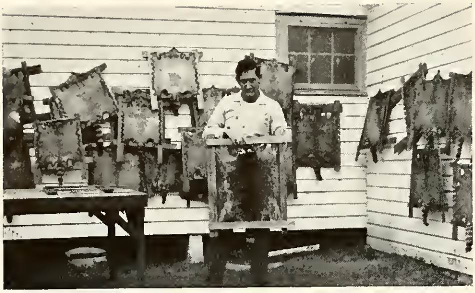
This photograph shows a "deep swamp" trapper putting the final touches to a baited set. He is sprinkling rotten saw dust over the set trap. Bait for a furbearer is a garfish head nailed to the trunk of the tree near the trap.

This will be a familiar scene during the current trapping season. For the first time in a generation, upland trappers will set traps on practically every footlog crossing over the upland streams of the state.

This is reflected in the price brought by raccoon pelts during the past four trapping seasons. The pelts brought a dollar each in 1958-59, then climbed 50 per cent to $1.50 each for the past three trapping seasons (1959-60, 1960-61, and 1961-62). It is expected that raccoons will be heavily trapped this season and will command a fair price, comparable to last season. Here again, the furbearer's carcass has played an important part, as raccoon meat finds a ready market for human consumption.

A study of figures for the past two decades shows that muskrats have decreased greatly in numbers, reaching a 20-year low in 1961-62. The 632,558 muskrat pelts officially recorded for last trapping season shows a great tapering off from the 8,337,411 pelts taken during the 1945-46 trapping season.

Nutria failed to reach the 100,000-pelt mark



Inland farm raccoon trapping has become a revitalized industry for the first time since the coon coat craze of the 1930's when raccoon pelts brought better prices than they could possibly bring this season. However, there is a marked demand for raccoon pelts and this universal value is little influenced by international economic conditions.

until the 1953-54 trapping season. During the decade when nutria pelts could be counted only in the tens of thousands, muskrat pelts began to plummet from the high of 1945-46 to a 20-year low last season.

Trappers were quick to blame the increasing populations of nutria for the decline in the number of muskrats; however, close scrutiny of facts and figures reveal that while nutria were building up to the 100,000-pelt mark, muskrat pelts tumbled over 7,000,000.

A great deal of misunderstanding sprang up about the nutria in Louisiana. For the record, it should be pointed out that the muskrat peak was the 1945-46 season when 8,337,411 rats were trapped, bringing trappers $1.50 each. In that same season only 8,784 nutria were taken, bringing the trappers $5 a pelt.

Louisiana today is at the point when this relatively new furbearer has reached a sustained peak from a production standpoint. The opportunity now exists for the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, land owners, trappers, fur dealers, fur processors and others to appraise themselves of facts about the fur industry, in order that they will be in a position to manipulate and engage in management practices so that the state will be able to maintain its steady production of both muskrats and nutria.

It now appears that both of these furbearers have reached a degree of stability and occupy an important part in the general economy of the state.

By management practices, there is every assurance of a renewable supply of both muskrats and nutria. Recent activities in the fur industry plainly show that the state has permanently added to its rich fur resources and the general and widespread benefits will continue for decades.

It is a fact that Louisiana is lucky and most fortunate to produce two basic furbearing animals that are highly known and respected throughout the world. ✢

Shrimp Production In Louisiana—1962

Lyle S. St. Amant

ALTHOUGH OPTIMISM is being expressed in many quarters about Louisiana's shrimp production in 1962 there still remains a big question as to just how much production will occur poundage wise. Much of the success of the shrimp fishery in 1962 must be attributed to the fact that prices have remained at a high level and the fishing industry has been able to recuperate to some extent from the poor conditions of 1961.

In order to understand production it is necessary that we compare 1962 to past years and with such a comparison one may get a clearer picture of the present condition of our shrimp industry. For example the 17 year average from 1939 to 1956 indicates that Louisiana produced annually about 80 million pounds heads-on shrimp of all species. In 1957 production dropped to an all time low of 30,285,000 pounds then gradually recovered in 1958 to 39.5 million, in 1959 to 56 million and in 1960 to 61.7 million pounds. By 1960 it appeared that we were well on the road to full recovery only to have production in 1961 drop to 31 million pounds or near the 1957 all time low.

What has happened in 1962? Well the returns are not all in but at present it appears that there will be approximately a 40% increase in total production. Is this good or bad? Actually production in 1962 even with an optimistic projection of the production from mid November to January 1, 1963 indicates that we will harvest only 42 to 45 million pounds of shrimp of all species in 1962. This is much better than last year but still is only about 50% of the production potential of the coast based on a 15 year average.

Our knowledge of the shrimp cycle was greatly increased in 1962 and much data was collected. From these data we were able to discover which parts of the coast were producing normally well and which parts produced below normal. In future years it is hoped further studies will indicate a management program that can help in bringing the shrimp production to its normal potential of 80,000,000 pounds annually. ✢

Wildlife Shorts

Oyster drills which prey on Louisiana's oyster crops are held in salt water aquaria in the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commisison's Grand Terre Island Marine Laboratory in order that scientists may study their life history and predatory habits.

Wintering waterfowl concentrations of this type can be found in hundreds of places throughout the coastal marshes of Louisiana. This photograph was taken in southwest Louisiana November 14, 1962. Additional migrations of ducks were reported moving south from the nesting areas at that time to swell the already great concentrations of waterfowl.

Ducks in Louisiana--1962

CONCENTRATIONS OF DUCKS in Louisiana throughout the fall and early winter months indicate that another serious mistake was made by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in formulating duck hunting regulations for 1962-63. The large numbers of ducks present in the state indicate that the regulations established were entirely too restrictive.

As early as mid-November, the number of ducks in Louisiana revealed that wintering flights would be above the 10-year average. This in itself shows that Louisiana's waterfowlers again have been unnecessarily deprived of enjoying one of the State's great traditional outdoor sports.

Massive concentrations of ducks in Louisiana alone indicate that a serious underestimation of waterfowl populations was again made by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as was the case in determining the 1962 duck hunting season.

Had the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service followed the advice of the Mississippi Flyway Council which requested a 40-day season, with a daily bag limit of four ducks and a possession limit of eight ducks, hunters would have had a reasonable season without endangering brood stock necessary to maintain and perpetuate the sport of duck hunting.

On the contrary, the federal service ignored the recommendations of the Mississippi Flyway Council which were endorsed by the other Flyway Councils and the National Waterfowl Advisory Council.

This resulted in the most curtailed duck hunting season in the history of waterfowling. It is anticipated that this has brought about another decrease in the sale of duck stamps; and seriously cut down public support for programs directed toward preserving and improving waterfowl habitat in both wintering and nesting grounds.

The Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission submitted a formal protest to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service concerning the drastically curtailed 1962 waterfowl hunting season. The resolution of protest was adopted September 25th at the regularly-scheduled open meeting of the Commission. This marked the second year that the Commission has filed strong protest resolutions with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Passage of the resolution of protest was made when it became obvious that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service had again made a grave error in estimating the number of ducks making up the continental populations. ✢

LOUISIANA'S

Disappearing Streams

Grits Gresham

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever" might well be applied to a Louisiana stream—until it disappears before the dam or dragline.

RELENTLESSLY as the passing years, the march of "progress" is swallowing Louisiana's streams! Inevitably as the falling leaves of autumn, for the rivers, creeks, and bayous you know today there will be no tomorrow.

For many, in fact, there is not today! They have disappeared from the scene just as surely as if they had gone up in the puff of smoke conjured by a magician.

The wand that was waved to perform this bit of legerdemain, however, was merely the bucket on the business end of a drag line, aided and abetted by chain saws, bulldozers, and concrete mixers.

"I have caught many a bass in there", the fellow said, with a pained expression in his eyes, as we stood in the delta country of northeast Louisiana and looked at the drainage canal that sliced through the bottomland in an unswerving line.

"Not in the past ten years, of course", he continued, gesturing toward the shallow, muddy water sandwiched between weedy spoil banks. 'This used to be a pretty little bayou, believe it or not!"

The scene shifts to another time, another part of the state. The youngster in the water let the ski rope tighten, brought his ski tips into position above the surface, and yelled "Hit it!"

"Right about there", the old timer leaning on the dock railing watched the small figure skim across the water far out on the lake, "was one of the best catfish holes on this bayou. I caught one outta there that weighed better'n forty pounds. 'Course, that was before the dam was built!"

There are other Louisiana streams which have not been changed physically, except for one vital point. They no longer contain water. Their source of supply, their flow of water, has been diverted by bisecting canals or siphoned off for irrigation.

These streams have not actually "disappeared". But I submit that a lake is not a river or stream,

In years gone by this stream held water year-round, from bank to bank, but the trickle you see here is all that remains now during dry periods of the year. Drainage programs and flood control tactics, causing rapid runoff and lowered water tables, brought it about.

Twisting and turning, filled with logs and treetops, a natural creek does lack efficiency at shuttling water out to the Gulf, but its efficiency at providing superb habitat for wildlife, at maintaining a year-round flow of cool, clear water cannot be denied.

a drainage ditch is not a creek, nor is a dry stream bed a bayou!

The forces behind these changes span the gamut of organizations—federal, state, parish, city. Private individuals and civilian organizations have contributed to the movement, directly and indirectly.

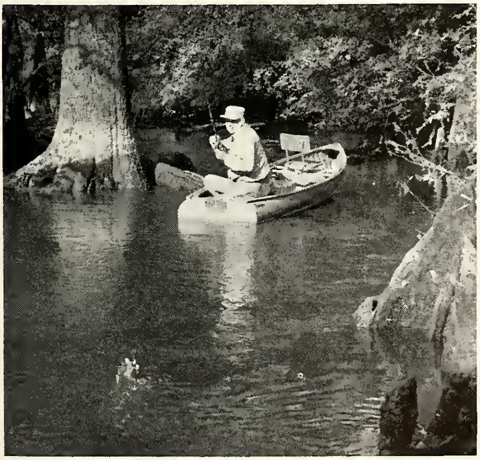
Most landscape altering projects of political subdivisions, be it a local levee board or the U.S. Corps of Engineers, stem from pressure from some segment of the public, thus the public is entitled to a share of the credit—or blame—for the results.

In Louisiana such projects fall largely into two categories. The first is impounding the waters of streams, creating lakes for recreation, municipal water supply, industrial water supply, source of water for irrigation, and flood control.

In contrast to the first, the second is for the purpose of eliminating unwanted or excess water. Streams and basins, sumps and sloughs are treated with one thought in mind: get water through them and into the Gulf as quickly as possible.

Flood control and improvement of land for agricultural production are the goals of this latter type of project.

Outdoor recreation, quantitatively speaking, almost benefits when a lake is built, and Louisiana sportsmen have profited from most of the man-made impoundments which dot our state. The lake which results when a dam is built usually provides more recreation for more people than did the original stream.



In their natural state our creeks, rivers, and bayous are highly productive of fish and other forms of wildlife.

We should recognize the fact, however, that a river dies when it is covered by the waters of a reservoir. No matter how noble the aim nor how desirable the result, this is true.

We should recognize the fact, again, that the life of a creek, gurgling its twisted, meandering path beneath the shading arms of moss-laden, stream-bank trees, comes to an end before the dedicated onslaught of flood control tactics—stream alignment, desnagging, straightening, bend elimination, dredging, bank stabilization and bank clearing. This is true, again, no matter how pressing the need nor how effective the treatment.

The stream has become a drainage ditch, a sun-baked canal confined between spoil banks. It crosses its segment of Louisiana in a compass-precise straight line, with all deviations from course made in broad, sweeping turns where an eddy would not dare form. While a flood control engineer might applaud the change, a bream would flap a fin in protest.

The flood control course on which Louisiana is launched is one, largely, of canalization. With a vast portion of the rain and other precipitation that falls in the U. S. having to pass through our state on its way to the sea, the aim is to confine it between walls on its journey.

The Mississippi River is the ultimate example of this, but most of the other major streams are treated in like manner. The giant levees paralleling the mighty Mississippi are duplicated, on only a slightly lesser scale, on the Ouachita, Black, Red, and Atchafalaya rivers.

Complimenting the overall plan, the canalization program is extended from these main arteries into most of the connecting creeks and bayous. The aim is to remove from these tributaries anything that would impede the flow of water, and the ultimate in this direction is the neat, concrete-lined canal through which irrigation waters are transported in some of the western states.

On some of our "streams" we lack only the concrete to have reached this point.

Completing the picture, much of the Louisiana landscape has been laced by a network of still smaller canals—drainage ditches, if you please—

Both spotted and largemouth bass abound in Louisiana's clear, cool, swift creeks, but the ideal habitat conditions in them come to an end when flood control "improvement" is applied.

which effectively funnel rainfall into successively larger arteries and then into the Gulf.

The overall effect is that our streams run bankfull, with a surge of roily, silt-laden flood waters, during periods of peak precipitation—but briefly. Following that is a sudden, swift drop in water levels until the stream (read canal) is only a trickle.

Rainfall no longer has time to seep into the underground water reservoirs, from where it formerly was released gradually by nature to maintain year-round stream flow for our rivers, creeks, and bayous.

Another effect of stream "improvement" work done for flood control, sometimes temporary but often permanent, is muddy water. For miles below the point where the work is actually in progress the silt-laden waters change the character of the stream completely. After the work is completed, the spoil banks are subject to erosion for years.

This muddy water not only affects the stream on which the work is being done, but often extends into distributaries and nearby lakes and bays. This is particularly true in the southern part of the state, where stream flows are governed by tides, and where winds can move muddy water for miles.

Pollution, of course, is another ill which can cause a stream to "disappear" insofar as the sportsman is concerned. Although Louisiana has made some progress toward solving this problem, the challenge that lies ahead is tremendous. Our course is clear, however; pollution cannot be tolerated in the years to come.

To sum up: we exchange some of our streams for lakes, and we destroy others in the name of flood control, drainage, and irrigation. Good or bad? Some of both, no doubt, with the final judgment to be written in the pages of history.

The dragline, efficient tool of the engineer, is the wand that causes streams to disappear, changing creek into canal, river into lake.

The point that should be made, however, is that our current society should carefully weigh the consequences of the steps it takes along these lines. This is a course of "no return".

Savor to the fullest, in any event, each opportunity you have to enjoy your favorite stream. It may disappear before you return again. ✢

Ken Biglane Resigns; LaFleur is Acting Chief

The Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, at its regular meeting on November 27, regretfully accepted the resignation of Kenneth E. Biglane, chief of the water pollution control division since 1956, and named Robert LaFleur, assistant chief, as acting chief pending action by the Department of Civil Service. He has accepted a position with the U. S. Public Health Service and will be located in Washington, D.C.

In accepting the resignation, the Commission commended Chief Biglane for his untiring efforts to improve water conditions in the state during his term of office. He also served as executive secretary of the Louisiana Stream Control Commission.

LaFleur is no stranger to water pollution problems, techniques of control and industry throughout the state.

A native of Opelousas, LaFleur has been associated with the Commission since 1950. ✢

Field edges or borders provide excellent cover for support and protection of both quail and rabbit population.

Modern farming methods unfortunately call for clean ditches and fence rows; leaving little room for game.

MORE GAME FOR THE FARM

Robert E. Murry and Jack O. Collins

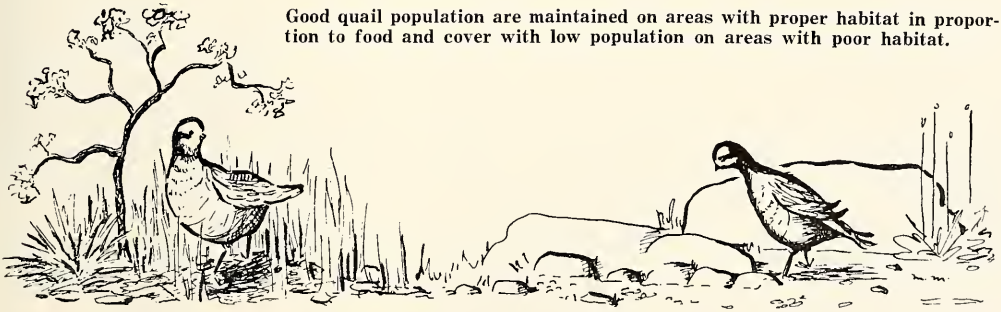
WOULD YOU LIKE to scatter a pinch of this, here and there, and leave a dab of that, there and yonder, and make your farm abound in wildlife? The answer is generally an emphatic YES! Unfortunately we do not know the formula for the magic "this" and "that". Nor would we know where to leave or scatter it. In other words a cheap, simple-to-apply and really effective game management practice for the modern farming operation just doesn't seem to exist.

Nearly everyone would like to do something to help farm game but since modern farming is such a competitive business few people who depend on the farm for their livelihood feel that they can afford to greatly modify their present farm methods for wildlife. Many people requesting planning assistance, when given a frank estimate of the cost and the results of extensive habitat improvement, will back away from wildlife. Others will accept a plan that they can afford and work towards a realistic goal of increased farm game.

In every instance we must realize that materially increasing game populations on high value farm land is almost never the cheap uncomplicated task we have often been led to believe. When you know what a few covey ranges or rabbit coverts cost, in terms of bales of cotton, pounds of beef or butterfat, bushels of beans, tons of cane or barrels of rice, and still wish to develop a farm for wildlife, your success is virtually assured.

Wildlife commonly looked upon as farm game includes bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbits and doves. Some farms are situated so that management for waterfowl can be easily accomplished.

This discussion will not deal with dove and waterfowl management but will attempt to cover briefly some useful points relative to rabbit and quail management.



Good quail population are maintained on areas with proper habitat in proportion to food and cover with low population on areas with poor habitat.

Clean farming operations with no field borders provide little or no productive habitat for quail and rabbit populations.

RABBIT MANAGEMENT

Cover manipulation is the principal and most useful tool of rabbit management on farmland. Large fields either all covered in crops or all bare, adjacent to large clean pastures and grazed wood lots, make a most unattractive rabbit habitat. Small fields with grass and weed growth on the ditch banks and cross fences are better.

One of the better agricultural plants for rabbit cover is *Lespedeza serecia*. This is a perennial legume that is a soil builder and does a good job of arresting erosion on moderate slopes. It does not tolerate heavy grazing by farm animals, but can furnish some rabbit browse without ill effect.

For most effective use of this or any other cover plant it should be used in long, relatively narrow, strips which border, or connect along the ends, with brush or briar cover. Fencing costs are higher when narrow strips are protected from grazing so the triangular plot which is made by fencing across the corner of an existing fence, is often used. Such plots should be left fallow along most of the fence lines to establish some heavier escape cover such as blackberry, haw bushes or whatever suitable plants occur naturally in the area.

In hilly country with its never ending battle against erosion, tops and branches from a pruning or logging operation can be piled in long loose piles in gullies which are eating into the farm. These brush piles can help provide cover for rabbits as well as retard the washing away of the soil. This type cover is usually badly needed in the grazed farm woodlot and can be the difference between no rabbits and a fair population.

Food for rabbits is usually provided by normal farm operations aimed at growing and gathering crops. Even fallow fields are usually abundantly blessed with food and cover most of the year. If your farm does not have crops of winter greens, such as rye grass, wheat, vetch or oats, as a normal operation, you can grow greens just for the rabbits.

Rabbit foods are more completely utilized when produced in very narrow, five foot, (about one disk width) strips adjacent to good rabbit cover. Since these plants also must be protected from cattle they can best be located along with the serecia strips. Heavy fertilization and liming at the recommended rate assures lush attractive growth. Recent studies have indicated that the fertilization of plots may be more important in determining rabbits use than the selection of the type of greens.

Our idea of an ideal rabbit food and cover strip is about 5 feet of blackberry briars of moderate size, 30 feet of rank serecia and 5 feet of well fertilized winter greens. This 40 foot strip can be as long as the operator wishes without any appreciable effect of the law of "diminishing effect".

QUAIL MANAGEMENT

In selecting a successful quail management practice we should keep in mind that the more efficient your present farming operation the more expensive quail management is likely to be. On the other hand if you own a place with a few ungrazed fallow fields and some brushy field edges the job is nearly done.

We can meet the winter food needs of a covey of quail on a quarter acre plot, but to provide the year long feeding cover, loafing cover, escape cover, nesting cover and food needs of a covey on that size plot is out of the question. In other words a plot of one fourth acre per covey range may fill the ticket in some types of farming operations. It can sometimes be made to work on the edges of large clean farms where several of the components of quail range are already provided incidental to normal operations. However the center of a large open pasture can become a covey range only by the investment of a minimum of about 2 or 3 acres.

The secret of managing is to carefully study existing conditions and to go to work in places where several requirements are already met.

One quail need is a year-round supply of food

Even in sanctuaries, food and cover are needed in addition to protection.

in cover that is open enough at ground level for easy movement of birds, but at the same time is tall enough to screen them. Grass, weed and agricultural seed are supplemented by the mast and fruits of trees and shrubs, green leaves of early spring grasses and forbs, and insects whenever they are available.

Loafing cover can be a loose mass of dewberry briars or a few tree tops draped about a weedy landscape. It must be capable of screening from overhead attack but be open enough to provide areas for sunning, dusting and preening.

Escape cover is just what the name implies. Several units on each covey range are ideal. Dense plum thickets or trees draped with Japanese honeysuckle may provide that safe haven from that other wild creature bent on having quail for dinner.

Nesting cover is ideally a mixture of low level openings and clumps of herbaceous growth. First and second year broom sedge fields are good examples of nesting cover. Disaster can strike when all of the attractive nesting cover is located along ditch banks and fences in narrow strips. Ditch banks often flood and most mammalian chick and egg eaters travel along the narrow cover strips. Where the nesting cover is in broader irregular areas the chances of nest destruction are considerably less.

Lespedeza Kobe, an annual, is one of our best plants for providing a source of winter food for quail. If enough of the other needs are present, it is a workable practice to plant a fourth acre plot of Kobe to harvest birds in. You can often attract a covey from the neighboring farm and those you do not shoot are allowed to finish the winter on a diet of quality food.

Lespedeza bicolor has been extensively used for quail in the past but has lost favor recently. Bicolor is a perennial that, in some situations in the state, is a very good plant. Summer drought, pocket grophers, alfalfa weevils, deer and cattle have soured many former fans of bicolor on it as a source of dependable winter food for quail.

Many small grains are planted for quail and are readily used as long as they are available. Competition by song birds and insects is more severe where these cereal grains are used.

All rabbit work can be expected to help quail and development for quail increases the ability of a range to support rabbits. For the landowner who wishes to do a good job for both quail and rabbits a mixed planting of serecia and Kobe is recommended.

All plantings should be limed and fertilized as suggested by the County Agent familiar with soil conditions of the parish. The following seeding rates have been used with good success. All rates are based upon 100 percent viable seed. Per acre rates are given so you should adjust the amount of seed to your particular plot size.

serecia lespedeza—8 pounds per acre
Kobe lespedeza—10 pounds per acre
Bicolor lespedeza—8,000 1 yr. old plants per acre
serecia-Kobe mixture—4 pounds serecia 7 pounds Kobe

All should be planted between February 15 and April 15. Bicolor should be transplanted during the dormant season. Kobe can generally be expected to do well for 2 to 4 years after establishment. Annual dressing with a low nitrogen fertilizer is good. Serecia once established provides many years of usefulness. The serecia-Kobe mixture should be watched for good germination and growth of Kobe. When serecia begins to "take" the plot a light late winter disking will assist the Kobe in its struggle for dominance.

If you would like to develop your place for farm game including doves and/or waterfowl you should contact your District Biologist Supervisor for planning assistance. If you do not know how to get in touch with him write directly to the Commission's New Orleans office or District Offices in Minden, Monroe, Alexandria, Ferriday, DeRidder, Opelousas, and Baton Rouge. ✢

Good food and cover provide excellent recreation in the form of quail hunting. Quail may be maintained with good huntable populations provided proper food and cover are present.

From the control room in the main office.

COMMUNICATIONS AID

R. P. Easterly

THE TWO GAME AGENTS pulled their vehicle to a halt as one remarked, "that's the third time those fish shockers have gotten away from us and I'm just about tired of chasing them."

The above incident and conversation may have taken place back in the early fifties before the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission installed one of the most elaborate radio communications systems ever utilized by a fish and game agency.

Since the day when Alexander Graham Bell sent his first message by electricity: "What God Hath Wrought!" we have seen continued progress in the communications field. No better proof of this are the strides that have been taken by the Commission's Law Enforcement Division, which is able to reach all or any of its game agents in a moment, whether they be in boat, automobile, seaplane, or on foot (with walkie-talkies) from its eleven huge broadcasting towers scattered throughout the state.

Thus we see the aforementioned situation would not likely happen today. The fish-shockers of a decade ago, would virtually have been surrounded by agents on foot, in boats or in automobiles and found themselves apprehended on short order.

One of the important, and comparatively recent adjuncts to the Commission's law enforcement division has been the Aviation Section, which besides having participated in rescues and other functions of the Commission, has been most important in its cooperation with the enforcement division.

Records compiled between a two-year period indicated that approximately 15,000 miles were covered by air each month. More than one-third of the flying time was spent on shrimp and oyster patrols. Two patrols, each a three-hour flight, are made for four months of the year along Louisiana's 800 mile coastline.

Fishermen operating in restricted waters, or during closed season, have been spotted on these aerial patrols and have often been apprehended on the scene by a flying agent.

One of the salient examples of how radio communication is effective and essential to law enforcement was the seizure and arrest of 13 men in possession of 188 ducks when game agents swooped down on their yacht by plane near North Island, in the Chandeleur group. The men had gone to the area in a yacht and the plane, seeming to come from nowhere, landed in the water along side. Hearing the plane's motors the hunters came out of the blinds and boarded the yacht and were arrested for having too many ducks in their possession.

Among the too-many-to-be-mentioned arrests was that of two violators hunting at night with searchlights in Zemurray Park near Hammond. In this case agents, upon arriving at the park in the early morning, stationed themselves at all entrances to the park and kept in communication by walkie-talkies and car radios.

After a wait of about an hour one of the agents spotted the deershiners and radioed other agents that the suspects were coming out of the park. When the suspects spotted the agents they passed the roadblock at breakneck speed and headed for

Wildlife Law Enforcement

Through Massive Towers

Ponchatoula with the agents in pursuit. One of the agents reported that its vehicle speedometer registered 105 miles per hour. Finally, by making a breakneck turn down another road, the suspects eluded the agents.

However, the agents radioed ahead to the sheriff at Ponchatoula and upon their arrival the violators were arrested and found to have illegally taken deer in their possession.

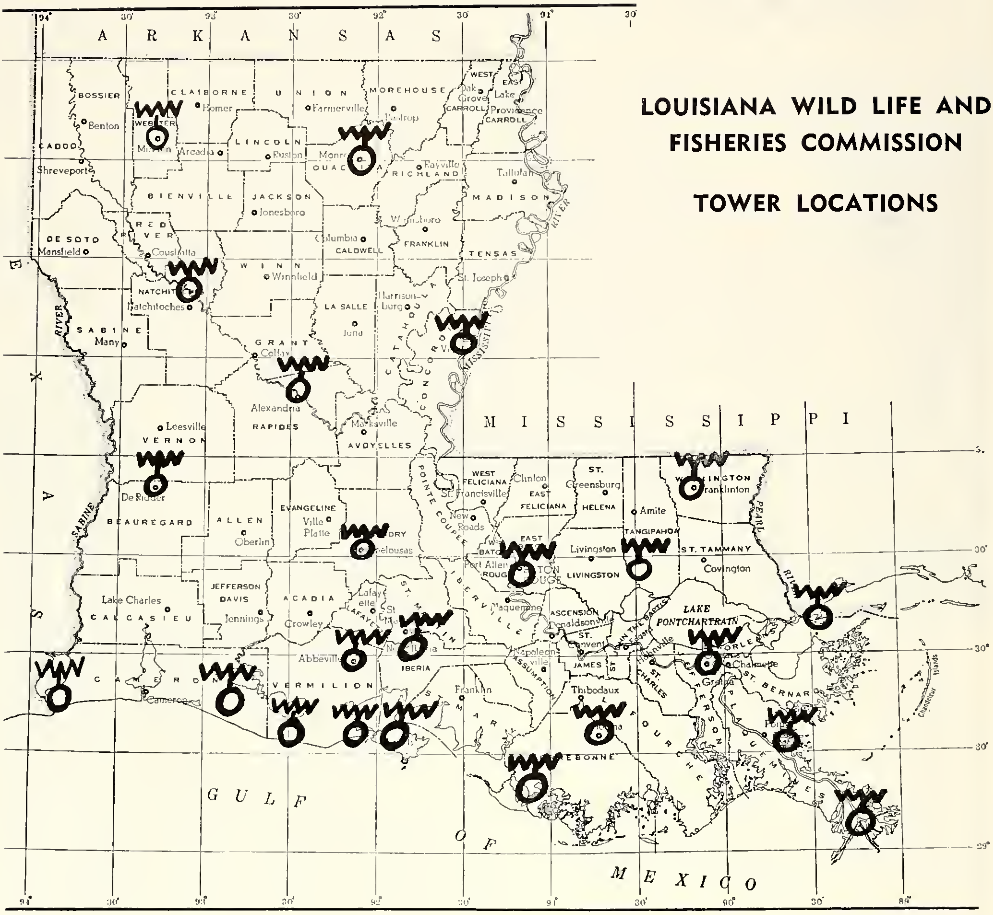
In the event of fish-shockings, radio communications work equally as well. A case in point, and there have been many, was that of an agent who received information on fish shockers from residents along the Bogue Chitto river in Washington Parish.

Upon investigation, the agent discovered the severed heads of catfish on the river having no hook marks in their mouths and some of them, from the size of the heads, apparently having weighed up to forty pounds. Working under cover the agent, with the aid of others, secured

To Patrol Boats

To Patrol Planes

To Patrol Cars



LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

TOWER LOCATIONS

the descriptions and license numbers of the three cars beings used by the fish shockers.

Having the descriptions of the cars and being equipped with walkie-talkies and car radios, the men started working down the river going to each landing and finally they spotted one of the cars, but the owner's boat was not at the dock. The agents waited and finally saw the men enter the car and pull away. "We let them out on the highway, the agents said, and followed them for a short distance and ordered them to stop. Two shocked catfish and a quantity of shocking paraphenalia was found in the car. The men said that their method of operation was to shock the fish and leave them in the river until daylight and then pretend they had been caught on trot lines." Thus it easily is seen that game agents of two decades ago would have had more than a problem apprehending such fish shockers as these.

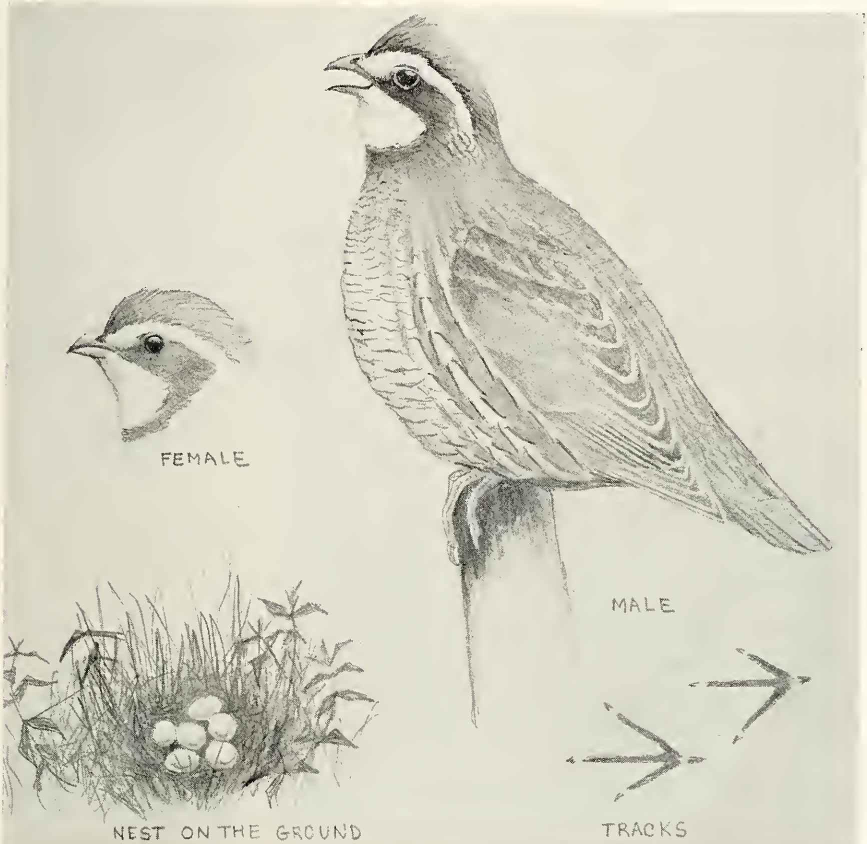
However, as in all smooth operations, there are always the "men behind the scenes". The commission looks to the Marine and Radio Department, known as the "WHARF" which is located at 7612 West End Boulevard and the New Basin Canal to keep in shape most of the repairs to this type of equipment.

Besides being on hand at all times to make major and minor repairs to the commission's craft, including engine installations and overhaul, the radio repair section at the wharf has a year-round task of keeping the mobile radio equipment in tip-top shape. The wharf's most recent acquisition in this field is a mobile radio repair unit to service equipment throughout the state.

Radio specialists at the radio repair shop not only service the commission's vehicle boat and airplane radios but also keep its many walkie-talkies in shape.

By means of a fixed radio transmitter, with remote control through the main office, the wharf is able to maintain contact with boats, planes, and mobile units all over the state at all times. ✣

Louisiana Wildlife



BOBWHITE

(*Colinus virginianus*)

The bobwhite quail is one of Louisiana's finest resident game birds. It abounds in all areas of the state wherever favorable food, cover and water conditions exist. Under good habitat conditions over widespread areas, large and abundant coveys of quail are generally to be found. Quail have a very high reproductive capacity and long hunting seasons are allowed by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission without adversely affecting the size of following year's population.

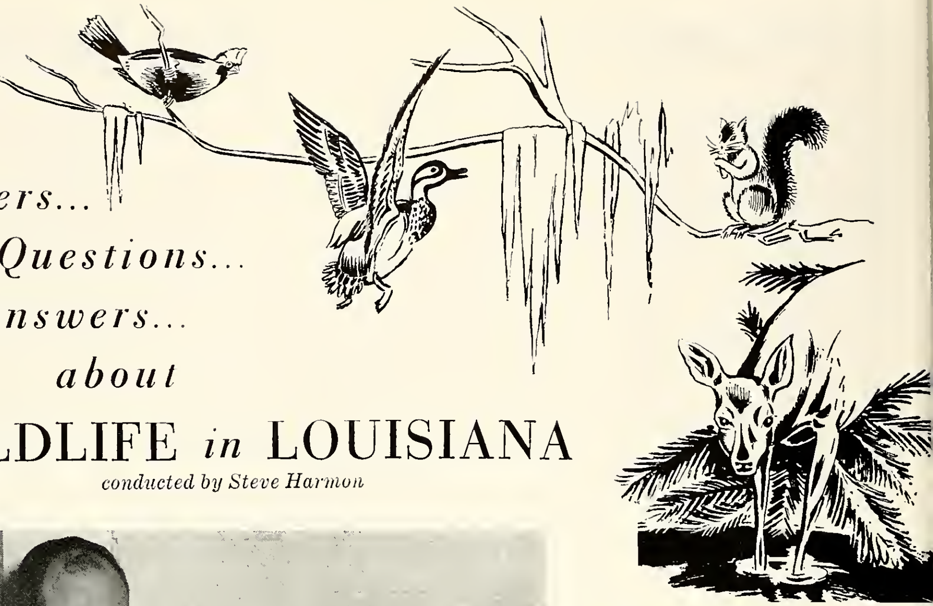
The bobwhite breeds from April to July in the state, but some nests have been found before and after that time. A nest contains an average of 10 to 14 eggs and is very well camouflaged. Incubation lasts for about 23 days.

The call of the bobwhite is a clear "BOBWHITE", and clucking may be heard when the birds are excited. Quail feed on grass seeds, grain, acorns, and insects.

A quail covey is usually a family (hatch) group that remains together until the following spring. Occasionally single birds or small coveys join another group or covey.

Scrapbook

Sidney A. Gauthreaux, Jr.



Letters... Questions... Answers... about WILDLIFE *in* LOUISIANA

conducted by Steve Harmon

Director Young Cited By Commission

A resolution was adopted by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission commending L. D. Young, Jr., director of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, for his services as chairman of the Commission for the year 1961-1962. The Honorable John Patterson, Governor of Alabama, is shown at left, presenting the award. The resolution cited Young for the discharge of his duties of the office "in full accord with the directives of the Commission . . . and he has additionally served the member states in many ways, including his efforts in the Congress which have contributed much to a full implementation of the Federal Shrimp Biological Research Program, and a five state expansion of the Tri-State Governors' Committee on Fishery Law Enforcement, during his term of office." Young was also cited for "excellent leadership" and "material advancement of the objectives."

Dear Editor: New Orleans, La.

We thought you would like to see this beautiful catch of bull reds caught in late October out of Grand Isle. Mrs. Frank and I were guided by veteran retired skipper Henry Parra, who knows waters around Grand Isle like the palm of his hand. He has been fishing island waters for better than a generation.

He guided us as a personal favor to some spots around Four Bayous Pass where I saw the greatest concentration of big fish I've ever seen. The water was literally churned with bull reds. We used mullet for bait and there was a strike and a battle each time a baited hook touched the water.

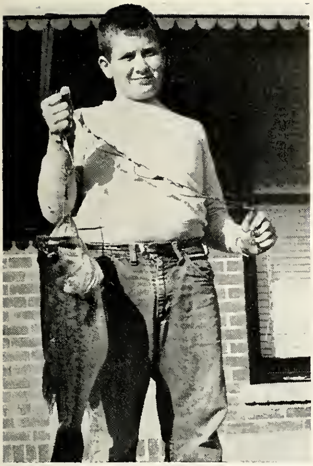
The redfish were feeding in the late afternoon and action was fast and furious. We were forced to stop fishing when the speed hull was loaded to capacity. This is proof that Louisiana has some of the finest fishing in the world. I know because I have fished and hunted in many foreign countries, as well as in Alaska.

CHARLES FRANK, JR.

Dear Editor: Natchitoches, La.

David Kaufman, 11, son of Dr. and Mrs. J. V. Kaufman of Natchitoches, is shown with the seven-and-a-half-pound bass he caught Sunday morning right in his own backyard.

The family home is on Cane River Lake just across from the U. S. Fish



Hatchery. David was spin fishing with a black bomber, a deep running bait.

David's prize fish is being mounted. He is a sixth grade pupil at St. Mary's Elementary School.
(Photo courtesy, Natchitoches Times)

Dear Editor: Grand Isle, La.

I thought you might be interested in publishing this photograph of four fishermen from Alexandria, La., who caught these "bull" redfish while fishing at night in Four Bayous Pass less than an hour's run eastward from Grand Isle. The anglers are Alfred Mansour, Joseph Rizzo, Vincent Mulé, and W. S. Campbell.

Fishing for bull redfish in the passes around Grand Isle has been the best in a number of years. Surprisingly, some of the best catches have been made at night, or in the late afternoons. Other catches made in those concentration spots for redfish have been astounding. For weeks on end, fishermen were able to virtually load the boat.

JAN SEBASTIAN

Dear Editor: Lockport, La.

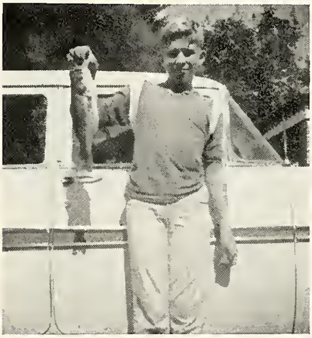
I am enclosing a picture of George Melancan, Russel Champange, and myself, with thirteen rabbits and four prairie hens (rails) we bagged on a hunting trip November 11. I would appreciate it very much if you would put this picture in the LOUISIANA CONSERVATIONIST.

I wish to express my thanks for keeping me on your mailing list for the magazine. It has many interesting articles. I look forward to all future issues.

ALVIN TERREBONNE

Dear Editor: New Orleans

Enclosed is a picture of a black bass which I caught recently on a red worm lure in Bayou St. John in New Orleans. I am 12 years old and I fish in the Bayou often. The bass have been striking lately at the Bayou.



BRIAN R. CUYLER

Dear Editor: Abbeville, La.

I am attaching a picture which I like to refer to as a "turnabout tarpon" because it was caught by Marion Higgins, weighmaster for so many fishing contests and tournaments in Louisiana he has lost count of them. Getting into those tremendous schools of tarpon south of Marsh Island made Higgins forget his weighing scales and concentrate on the silvery scales of the fish swarming about our boat. It was his first tarpon in 30 years although he has weighed thousands of silver kings for other anglers during his career as official weighmaster for Louisiana fishing rodeos. It's a nice tarpon but Higgins will never know exactly what his tarpon weighed. He had his rod and reel instead of his weighing scales!

DR. ROBERT J. YOUNG, JR.

Dear Editor: **Welsh, La.**

Attached is a photo which we thought might be of interest to the readers of the LOUISIANA CONSERVATIONIST.

Johnny Benoit, at left, and Ralph Hayes, are shown with a very nice catch of redfish taken Wednesday, November 7, at the lower end of Big Lake.

The total catch was 43 reds, ranging in weight from two pounds to 12 pounds. Fresh shrimp were used for bait and the reds were caught on medium tackle.

This is further evidence of the wonderful fishing enjoyed in the coastal waters of Southwest Louisiana.

C. EDWIN HOWARD
Editor, The Welsh Citizen

Mr. Bobwhite Quail ⁖ Diminishing Habitat Rural, Louisiana

Dear Bob:

I should have written sooner to assure you that you are still tops in my book. I want you to know that right now I firmly believe that my feelings for you can never be alienated by any feathered foreigner.

Sure I have had a hand in trying to naturalize these newcomers. In a nut shell the reason that we are cooperators with the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife project to locate suitable game birds from abroad is that you just haven't supplied our needs recently. You and I understand why you are not capable of making still more adjustments in your seasonal needs, adjustments which would allow you to do as well with modern farming as you have done with land under less specialized use. We are looking for a bird that can produce huntable numbers on the same lands that are intensively used for agriculture.

The Black Francolin

Let me tell you about this new bird.

Our imports were wild trapped in India although they occur throughout much of Asia. Our release areas are two representative types of range that you once did a splendid job of providing sport in. These areas are in Southwest and Northeast Louisiana and have become less attractive to you in recent years. We call them the Gum Cove and the Oak Ridge releases.

During the past two breeding seasons male birds have been common on each area perching on fence posts or other elevated places and giving out their strange cicada like calls. During the fall birds are seldom seen. Several broods of young have been reported from both areas each year.

The name of this new applicant for citizenship is the black francolin. The Latinized version is *Francolinus francolinus* and he weighs about two and one half times as much as you do. Unlike you he is a "loner" in the fall and winter. Found mostly as singles, twos are not common. Larger groups may occur around feeding areas at one time but show no social order such as a covey. They smell mighty good to a dog that has been trained to point you but they do not consistently hold point as well as you. Some birds sit tight while some choose to slip away. Some of your old pointer and setter friends may be about to become slightly neurotic attempting to adjust to the defensive tactics of this bird.

From my brief acquaintance with these birds it appears that they can take advantage of two extremes of cover that stop you cold. They readily use the dense cover of rank weeds that are a little too thick for you. For use this cover must thin out at ground level but can still be thicker than you prefer. In late winter they have been seen in closely grazed pastures several rods from any type of overhead cover.

From studies made in Asia we believe that the feeding habits of the francolin are much like yours except that they may consume a higher percentage of insects than you do. They are reported to be excellent table birds. Broods consist of five to ten young and the young part company at about eight weeks of age.

The Bobwhite Quail

The role of the cock bird in rearing young is not clearly understood. He calls from his elevated station many times each day during the breeding season. The hen does all of the incubation and all of the caring for the young. One brood per season is said to be all that is reared by francolin.

Their future status is still in doubt. They have survived extremely cold weather and the Gum Cove birds lived through the flooding caused by hurricane Carla. As indicated earlier the transplanted birds have reared young each year. They have done as well as could be expected so far but remember that this venture is still a series of calculated risks financed by the sportsman's dollar. Every effort was made in selection of a good candidate for introductory trials. Wild stock was acquired and released in recommended numbers. Two critical years are behind us and if results for the next several are as good we will be able to breathe a sigh of satisfaction.

I hope to visit you frequently this winter and for years to come. I felt that I needed to write to reaffirm my affection and to assure you that regardless of the feathered inhabitants of our state in the future I will still be a loyal subject of King Bob wherever you occur in huntable numbers.

Sincerely,

A. BIRD HUNTER

BLACK FRANCOLIN— VITAL STATISTICS

	1961		1962	
	Gum Cove	Oak Ridge	Gum Cove	Oak Ridge
No. Released	110	152	201	190
Nests Reported	None	Yes	None	Yes
Broods Observed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1961 Hatched Birds Observed as Adults....	...	...	Yes	Yes
Extreme Spread Reported*	9 mi.	23 mi.**	6 mi.	8 mi.

*Birds most numerous within 3 miles of release. Occupied range with breeding density of birds seemed to be about 6 miles from each release area in summer of 1962.

**One bird killed by young quail hunter in 1961-62 quail season 23 miles from Oak Ridge release.

The Louisiana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit

WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT of the Louisiana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit a step toward more progressive wildlife management in Louisiana has been taken. This important addition to Louisiana's wildlife program has been made possible through the cooperation of four agencies: The Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service—Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, The Wildlife Management Institute and Louisiana State University, School of Forestry and Wildlife Management.

The agreement for this Unit was signed April 1, 1962 and the Unit became a functional reality with the appointment of John D. Newsom as Leader on August 20, 1962.

For many years people in the field of wildlife management had sought the establishment of a Research Unit at L.S.U. It was felt that the Unit would fill a gap in Louisiana's wildlife management program as well as provide information on wildlife management problems of national importance through a stable, unhampered and continuing wildlife research program.

Basic objectives of the Unit are:

1. To investigate and correlate studies of the production, utilization, management and restoration of desirable populations of wildlife compatible with good land use.
2. To provide technical and professional training on various levels in wildlife management, teachings, research, demonstrations and administration.
3. To demonstrate research findings through extension and practical management of game and fur-bearing animals and of other desirable species of wildlife, and encourage wildlife restoration through programs with schools, youth clubs and adult groups.
4. To make available to landowners and operators, sportsmen, conservation officials, extension workers, teachers, and others the facts, methods, and new findings discovered through research, and through literature suited to local and State conditions.
5. To disseminate research findings through the publication of scientific semipopular and popular reports, bulletins, circulars and journal and magazine articles.

John D. Newsom

The Louisiana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit will be supported by funds from each of the cooperating agencies. The Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and L.S.U. will each provide through funds or services or both a sum of not less than $10,000 annually and the Wildlife Management Institute will provide a nominal sum of $1,000 annually in support of the unit program.

Activities of the Unit will be controlled by a Coordinating Committee composed of three members; one from the College of Agriculture—representing L.S.U.; one from the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission who will represent that agency and the Unit Leader who will represent the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Wildlife Management Institute. All projects and programs including obligation of Unit funds will be controlled by this Committee.

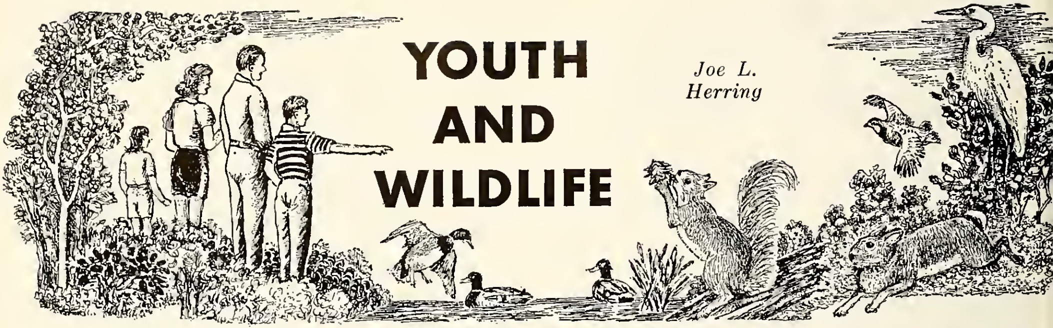
Fortunately for the Louisiana Unit, Louisiana State University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Management, through the work of Professors Bryant A. Bateman, Leslie L. Glasgow and Robert J. Muncy in their teaching and research, is highly regarded in the field of wildlife management. With the assistance of these men and the availability of other unexcelled university facilities the Unit will prove to be a valuable adjunct to the wildlife management program in Louisiana.

Although the Unit program is in its infancy there are already seven wildlife graduate students conducting various studies on several phases of wildlife management. The Unit Leader is presently engaged in the preparation of an outline of wildlife research needs in Louisiana and in addition will begin independent research on one of the important problems in the near future.

Those people interested in the intelligent management of Louisiana's and the Nation's wildlife resources owe a vote of thanks to the agencies and individuals responsible for the establishment of the Louisiana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. ✢

YOUTH AND WILDLIFE

Joe L. Herring



SCIENCE FAIRS

Let's look back to the year 1828 when the American Institute of the City of New York, "incorporated for the purpose of encouraging and promoting domestic industry in this state and the United States in manufacturers, agriculture, arts and commerce" held its first industrial fair. This fair, held in October of this same year may be considered as the beginning of the Science Fairs for students as we know them today.

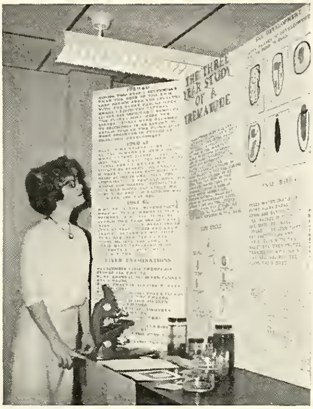
Believe it or not at this fair the iron plow had its first showing along with other up-to-date and so thought of modern gadgets.

One hundred years later the Institute had its first display of exhibits designed by school students of precollege age. This showing was so successful that it was scheduled as an annual event. From the start much encouragement was received for the establishment of science clubs and similar groups.

The functions of this annual fair grew with such magnitude that the American Institute could no longer support the non-profit clubs, student laboratories and publications. The activities of the science club movement were transferred to Science Services, Washington, D. C., a non-profit institution for the popularization of science.

Many organizations such as the American Institute of Biological Sciences, Optical Society of America, American Pharmaceutical Association, American Dental Association, American Chemical Society, Society of American Bacteriologists along with such governmental groups as U. S. Air Force, U. S. Navy, U. S Atomic Energy Commission, to name a few, participate in Science Fair activities.

So today we have one of the fastest expanding groups in the world, our Science Fair participants. With the various age and subject divisions every student has the privilege to enter. Starting with the local or school competition, going on to region, state and then national competition. This year the finals from 208 affiliated fairs held in this country and abroad participated in the national science fair, international in Seattle, Washington. Projects from these participants represented the best work of almost a million students.



Ann Anding, Delhi, Louisiana, with her display "The Three Year Study of a Trematode in Whitetail Deer." Ann placed first in Region Three competition judged at Northeast State College and went on to place second in Louisiana with her work last year. The science of our wildlife species make very informative and educational displays. Ann's teacher was Mr. Henry Hazlett, Delhi, Louisiana.

Biological science fair displays may be based on wildlife. This past year many Louisiana participants illustrated various phases of good game or fish management.

INSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Biology through the microscope is fun with the Skil Craft Research Electric Microscope Lab. Several types of microscopes and science instruction kits are manufactured by the Skil Craft Corporation. For the beginner these sets are very useful in preparing and viewing slides of butterfly wing scales or small plant and animal life. Skil Craft Company sums up the use of these education microscope and science sets in a few words, "Science is educational fun." If your local hobby craft store does not have a line of Skil Craft sets, information may be secured from the Skil Craft Corporation, 325 West Huron Street, Chicago 10, Illinois.

READ WITH ME

The Rainbow Book of Nature, by Donald Culross Peattie, illustrated by Rudolf Freund, published by the World Publishing Company, New York, New York (with more than 230 illustrations).

Mr. Peattie's approach to natural history is original and varied. He has written a book, not just for children already interested in the out-of-doors, but for the city child as well. For here are pages about the antiquity of pigeons, domesticated in Babylon, or explaining how peregrine falcons come to nest on the crags of skyscrapers. Here too are desert and seashore, the farm pond in spring and the meadow in summer, even the old barn with its swallows and owls and its cattle bred by man from strains lost to history. Here is talk of the colors of life and the shapes of it, and the deep-lying patterns of its organization, all made fun and simplicity itself.

BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

Three new Educational Bulletins are available from the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission free upon request to this office. Titles are "Welcome! Wildlife Agents," "Black Bear in Louisiana," and "Louisiana Rabbit Hunting — Improvement Through Management." These booklets published by the Commission give very informative facts on the subjects covered.

Also available, courtesy of Phillips Petroleum Company, is a booklet titled "Phillips 66 Digest of Camping by Car and Boat." This is a very informative thirty page booklet on camping with good photos and text.

Copies of all four publications may be obtained free by writing Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

WILDLIFE INSTRUCTORS ACTIVITIES

October was a busy month for Wildlife Instructors in the schools throughout Louisiana. Instructors presented 301 programs with an attendance of 10,791 students. This total included elementary and secondary schools. Along with school programs eleven displays were constructed with 251,450 viewers. Seven educational television programs were given with an estimated viewing audience of 140,000, so during October many individuals and groups throughout Louisiana were able to hear or see some phase of Louisiana Wildlife Resources on a program.

This stringer of black crappie or "sac-a-lait" is the answer to a fisherman's prayer.

Chalk up another member of the rapidly growing fisherman's fraternity.

THE CRAPPIE

THE NOD FOR THE FISH with the most common names throughout the country must inevitably go to the crappie. To the crappies, it would be more accurate to say, for there are two distinct species—the white crappie and the black crappie.

In much of south Louisiana the crappie is a "sac-a-lait"; in northwest Louisiana it's a "white perch"; in northeast Louisiana it's a "speckled perch". Other local names used for this fish in other states include papermouth, tinmouth, strawberry perch, newlight, calico bass, strawberry bass, and speckled crappie.

No matter which of the more than 50 local names you apply to these fish, you're still speaking of two of the most angled for species in the nation.

The white crappie is a pale silvery-olive, shading to green or brown on the back. The belly is bright silver to white, and there are usually 7 to 9 dark vertical bars on the sides.

The black crappie is also silvery-olive, with dark back, but with many green or blackish spots irregularly spaced over the sides. It has no distinct vertical bars as does the white crappie.

Although color of the fish will vary considerably depending upon the water they come from, the white crappie is generally lighter in color than the black crappie. A definite distinguishing feature, however, is the fact that the white crappie has 5 or 6 spines in the front portion of the dorsal fin, while the black crappie has 7 or 8.

In size both crappies will run up to two pounds, with an occasional one topping three. The record for both species is slightly over five pounds.

Crappie spawning activity is much like that of bass, both occurring when water temperature reaches about 60 to 65 degrees. The fish are nest-builders, like the other sunfish, but in general build their nests in somewhat deeper water than do bass, often from 3 to 6 or even 8 feet.

Insects, crustaceans, minnows, and small fish are the foods that crappie live on.

Both crappies are native from southern Canada, the Great Lakes region, to the Gulf coast, but they have been introduced widely in other sections and are now found in just about every state.

In Louisiana they are found in every parish, and in almost every body of fresh or brackish water in the state.

Crappie are tolerant of a wide variety of fresh and brackish water conditions, just as are bluegills. The black crappie seems to prefer clearer water than does the white. Both are fond of brush tops, stumps, pilings and any other protective cover that might be found in the water. These places, consequently, are favored fishing spots for anglers.

Crappie thrive best in lakes and streams which have fairly deep areas in them, and they often concentrate in these deeper portions.

Of all the Louisiana fresh water game fish, the

All crappies like water areas with large amounts of protective cover in the form of bark piles, tree tops and other debris.

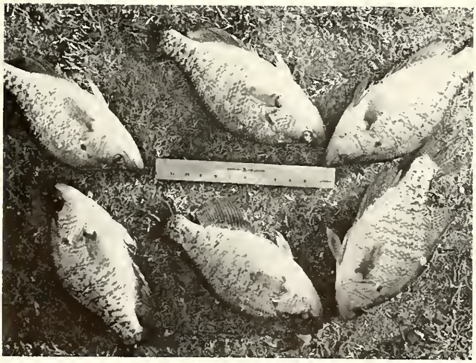
crappie is most preferred when it comes to table fare. Their sale is illegal, of course, but their attractiveness as a food fish, and the ease with which they can be taken with illegal traps and nets, led in past years to a substantial illicit taking and selling operation.

The favored method of angling for crappie, used by tens of thousands of Louisiana fishermen each year, is with a cane pole wth a live minnow for bait.

Crappie can be taken, however, with artificial lures on fly, spinning, or casting rods. They are frequently taken by fishermen casting for bass. Most effective lures are small spinners tipped with white bucktail, or small white or yellow jigs and bucktails. For best results they should be fished slowly.

Crappie are extremely sensitive to depth, and successful fishermen know they must place their lure or bait at the exact depth level at which the crappie are on that particular day, at that particular time.

There are no closed seasons nor size limits on crappie in Louisiana, and the daily creel limit is 50 fish.



This catch of white crappie will provide some choice eating.

Management measures used by the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission for crappie are the same as those for all fresh water game fish, including: 1. Enforcement of creel limits and the methods-of-taking provisions; 2. Enforcement of provisions against the sale of game fish; 3. Lake renovation when fish populations become unbalanced in favor of rough fish species; 4. Stocking of new lakes and ponds, although crappie are not recommended for most farm ponds; 5. Providing technical help in planning or managing private or public fishing lakes; 6. Regulation of commercial fishing 7. Spraying of water hyacinths to control them, without which treatment they would completely cover many fishing lakes; 8. Fluctuating water levels to control submergent aquatic vegetation, to control overabundant forage fish species, and to increase fertility of lakes; 9. Continual work toward pollution control and abatement. ✣

Shooting Preserve Meet Set For Dallas Jan. 13-15

SPORTSMEN wishing to learn more about shooting preserves and game breeding are invited to attend a three-day session on these subjects at Dallas.

The North American Game Breeders and Shooting Preserve Association, Inc., is holding its annual convention at the Baker Hotel January 13-15, 1963. It is not necessary for those attending to be a member of the association.

The first day of the convention, January 13, will feature a trip to W. R. Mason's Snug Harbor Shooting Preserve near Carrollton, Texas. It will be followed by a Texas-style barbecue.

Shooting preserves are now allowed to operate in 44 states. The Sportsmen's Service Bureau estimates that more than 2,000,000 game birds will be stocked on preserves during the 1962-63 hunting season. ✣

The Bird of the month

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT

Charles R. Shaw

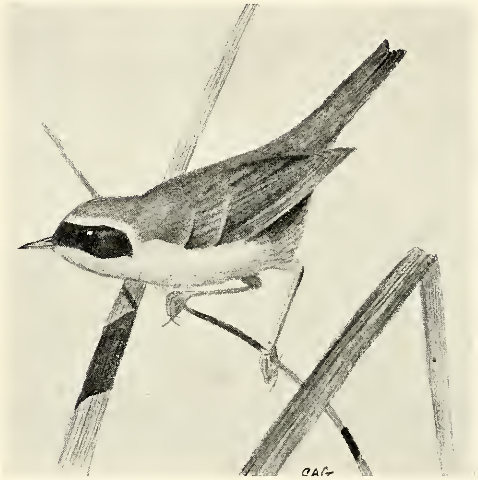
Geothlypis trichas

THE NAME OF THIS BIRD is, of course, wholly descriptive, because it is quite common not only in Louisiana but throughout the United States and it does have a yellow throat and breast. However the most striking marking is the black rectangular mask of the male, which crossing the forehead and face, extends through the eye and reaches along the upper part of the sides of the neck. This mask is usually bordered on the upper edge by white. The upperparts are olive-green and the belly whitish with the under tail-coverts of yellow. The only bird likely to be mistaken for the Yellowthroat is the Kentucky Warbler and the yellow eye ring of the latter should serve as a good distinguishing mark. The female Yellowthroat with its brownish forehead, paler yellow throat and a whitish eye ring is much more difficult for the novice bird watcher to identify and may best be learned through its association with the male.

Dr. George H. Lowery, Jr., states in his book, LOUISIANA BIRDS, that the Common Yellowthroat is present the year around in southern Louisiana and is always fairly common, even in winter, while in northern Louisiana it is considered common from March or April until September.

Although belonging to the group known as Wood Warblers these pretty little birds are much more apt to be found frequenting marshy sites, flitting in and out among the cattails and other aquatic plants. Brushy thickets, especially in damp locations, and stream banks overgrown with weeds are also likely spots to locate these busy little creatures. If they persist in staying in deep cover they usually can be brought out into view by the simple trick of making a squeaking noise which excites them into investigating.

The Yellowthroat, as well as the rest of the Wood Warblers is naturally considered beneficial, living primarily on insects and their larvae.



Most authors agree that the song of the Yellowthroat sounds something like "witchity-witchity-witchity" with minor variations. At any rate it is rather distinctive and not too hard to learn to recognize.

The nest is located on or near the ground and may be constructed of a variety of local materials such as reeds, coarse grass, weeds, strips of bark, and leaves, usually with a lining of fine grass and/or hair. Construction may vary from a shallow cup of fine grass to a comparatively bulky six inch structure. Inside the nest will be found from three to five (usually four) white eggs with some brownish spots. The spots may vary considerably in shade and are usually rather sparse and mainly grouped around the large end of the egg. The young birds seem to mature rapidly and according to some authorities may leave the nest in about a week.

(Photo By Jack Britt)

THE PRINCE OF GAME BIRDS....

Mr. Bobwhite

Possibly no other game bird excites the dyed-in-wool bird hunter than does the quail. Here in Louisiana the season is from November 22, 1962 through February 25, 1963. The daily bag limit is ten with a possession limit of twenty. The Pelican State contains vast acreages of Quail range.

A good bird dog is a must.